



'Horace' – the first SANE Black Dog wearing a design by the artist Anthony Cleynert

25 years of meeting the challenge of mental illness:
SANE launches nationwide Black Dog campaign to raise awareness
of depression and mental health.

Black Dog sculptures are to be placed across London and other major UK cities to raise awareness, reduce stigma and misunderstanding of mental health problems and to encourage more people to seek help.

One in five people will experience the shadow of depression in their lifetime and now mental health charity SANE is launching the '**Year of the Black Dog**' campaign to challenge this condition and mark its 25th anniversary. Depression underscores most forms of mental illness and the World Health Organisation predicts that by 2030 it will become the single largest global burden of disease.

Why the Black Dog?

The **Black Dog** has been used as a metaphor for depression from Classical mythology through to Medieval folklore and contemporary times, with well known figures such as Sir Winston Churchill using the phrase to describe his darker moods.

The Vision:

SANE has chosen to bring this condition to life using striking sculptures of **Black Dogs** and hopes to place at least 40 of these in cities across the UK. Each **Black Dog** will wear a 'SANE Collar of Hope' and a 'coat' designed by a celebrity, artist or member of the public. The first dog was presented at the opening of Ray Davies' Meltdown Festival in June, followed by residencies at the Udderbelly tent on London's South Bank, the N1 shopping centre in Angel, Islington and The Plaza shopping centre on Oxford Street.



"We hope the physical presence of a black dog will help people to define their experience of this invisible condition and provide a language in which to express inner feelings of anxiety, depression and loneliness."

(Marjorie Wallace CBE, Founder and Chief Executive of SANE)

SANE has launched a call to action to raise £250,000 to build the campaign fund and asks that people lend their support in any way they can. To find out more about how people can get involved, visit www.sane.org.uk

What happens next?

The '**Year of the Black Dog**' will culminate in 2012 with an auction of the sculptures to raise funds for mental health. SANE hopes that the Black Dogs will continue to communicate a message of hope beyond SANE's 25th anniversary year and that the sculptures will be donated in particular to schools and colleges. The profile of the campaign will be maintained by PR and media activities, celebrity support, and gala events. Stars already backing the campaign include Rory Bremner, Beverly Knight, Ruby Wax, Judith Owen, KT Tunstall and Stephen Fry, who said: "*SANE and their Black Dog campaign has my fullest possible support. What they are doing is wonderful and important.*"

SANE's Black Dog Campaign is not just a great idea, it is a wonderful opportunity for everyone - sufferers, families and clinicians - to take a wholly new perspective on depression. Knowing that something can be done is itself transformative, allowing us to see clearly that depression need not have the last word on who we are or how we live our lives.

(Professor Mark Williams, Director OMC at Prince of Wales International Centre for SANE Research).

For further information and to find out where Horace and Friends are on their grand UK tour please contact Claire Cooper, SANE Media and Communications Officer, on 020 7422 5564 or ccooper@sane.org.uk

Notes to Editors

About SANE

SANE is a UK-wide charity set up in 1986 to improve the quality of life for people affected by mental illness. It has three objectives:

1. to raise awareness and combat stigma about mental illness, educating and campaigning to improve mental health services
2. to provide care and emotional support for people with mental health problems, their families and carers as well as information for other organisations and the public
3. to initiate research into the causes and treatments of serious mental illness such as schizophrenia and depression and the psychological and social impact of mental illness

SANE Services:

There are three main ways to access our services for emotional support and information:

SANEline– 0845 767 8000 6pm – 11pm

*SANE*email - http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/email/

SANE Support Forum (peer support) -

http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/supportforum/

To support SANE and join the community, become a fan and follow SANE on Twitter (@CharitySANE), YouTube (<http://bit.ly/eEOWsE>) and Facebook (<http://on.fb.me/hxDan2>). To explore the new SANE website, click here <http://www.sane.org.uk/home>. (Alternative link <http://bit.ly/fQk3If>). For more information, please visit the SANE website at www.sane.org.uk.

About Depression

Depression is associated with most forms of mental illness. In the UK, estimates of the number of men, women and children affected by mental ill health range from **6,000,000 to 10,000,000** at any given time.